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A Challenge to America

BY AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD

If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? 2 *Kings* 5:13.

NAAMAN was a leper. He was afflicted with one of the most insidious and baffling diseases known to antiquity. It is supposed to be a filth disease, due to the absence of cleanliness and to unsanitary ways of living. In support of this theory is the fact that modern civilization has practically stamped it out. Except for sporadic cases, it is found today only among savage tribes and half-civilized races. And yet, wherever found, it is practically incurable. Isolation is the only effective treatment. This will not cure the patient but it will prevent contagion. This was the purpose of the Jewish law. It branded the leper as unclean. His clothing was disheveled and he was made to dwell apart from the habitations of men. He could not return to city or camp until the priest, who was the only physician in those days, had declared that he was once again whole.

In view of the nature of this disease, there would seem to have been no sacrifice consistent with personal honor and integrity which the Syrian captain would not have made and made gladly in order to be rid of his affliction. Wealth and power and prestige apart from physical health and strength are only mockeries. The fact that he had taken this long journey in response to the chance suggestion of a little Hebrew slave girl would seem to bear out this belief. Had the prophet asked him to perform some great feat, something which would have tested his strength or courage or endurance, he would doubtless have obeyed. But

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when he was asked simply to go down into the Jordan and dip himself seven times, he was furious. It touched his pride. Why this exaltation of this "turbid, yellow stream" above the crystal water of his native land? Had he come all the way from Damascus to Samaria simply to take a bath? He would have gone away in anger and indignation had it not been for the remonstrance of his attendants. "My Father," they asked, not knowing but that their temerity might cost them their heads, "if the prophet had bidden thee do some great thing, wouldest not thou have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" According to the story, Naaman turned back and obeyed the prophet's command and was cured.

Plenty of Naamans Today!

The race of Naamans has never become extinct. They illustrate one of the most familiar traits of human nature. Call for some great thing, something that will attract attention and win fame, and we respond willingly. But call for the faithful performance of our ordinary, everyday duties, and we signally fail. Israel itself affords an illustration. Repeatedly the people had come to their prophets and seers and asked what they must do in order to stamp out the unrighteousness which seemed to be sapping the very life of the nation. Had they been asked to undertake a pilgrimage or inaugurate a crusade, they might have done it. But when the prophets bade them cease to do evil and learn to do well—do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God—they went away furious.

We find a similar illustration in the attitude of the Scribes and Pharisees toward the teachings of Jesus. At first they saw in him a new prophet. They came to him and asked what they could do to cure the religious indifference and neglect which were gradually destroying the people's faith. Had he asked them to make longer prayers, or to widen the hem of their garments, or to paste a few more scripture texts upon their foreheads, they would have done it. But when he asked them to be good, to give up tithing mint and anise and cummin and give heed to the weightier things of the law, justice and mercy and truth, they went away and plotted his death.

The rich young ruler in the gospel story exemplifies the same spirit. He came to Jesus, assuring him that he had kept all of the commandments, and asked what he still lacked if he were to inherit eternal life. Had Jesus demanded that he build a temple or endow a hospital or erect a church, he would have done it, as he is described as a man of great wealth. But when Jesus bade him liquidate his possessions and redistribute them among his poorer brothers and sisters, his assurance left him and he went away sorrowful.

Wanted—Crusaders!

History abounds with illustrations of this baneful habit of mind. It is so easy to endure hardship, to face persecution, to take one's place in the arena and die a martyr's death. It is so hard to do one's duty when the doing of it brings neither honor nor praise. Multitudes of men, women and children willing to set forth upon a crusade to wrest the tomb of the Christ from the hands of the Moslem; only a few here and there willing to make any appreciable sacrifice in order to enthrone the spirit of the Christ in the hearts and lives of men. How often have the world's great moral and spiritual leaders had their vision of a new and better social order, and sought to impart that vision to their fellows, only to have wrung from their lips the mournful lament which Jesus uttered as he looked down upon the holy city: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not."

Would that our present day civilization had been as successful in stamping out the moral leprosy which is gnawing into the very vitals of the nation, as it has been in stamping out that which affects only the body. Is not the bane of our modern life the lure of the spectacular, the cult of bigness, the eagerness to do something that will be seen of men, and the increasing difficulty of securing the faithful performance of what is important, even though obscure? When shall we learn the truth of Longfellow's words, "Life is real, life is earnest"? When shall we realize that there is nothing spectacular about it, that it is more like a workshop than a playhouse? When shall we recognize that great deeds can never save the world as long as little deeds are left undone? "The true calling of the Christian," said one of the church fathers, "is not to do extraordinary things but to do ordinary things in an extraordinary way." Or as Jesus said, only he that is faithful in that which is least can be trusted with that which is much.

Confidence the Great Need Today

Just now we have a special need for this lesson. In the midst of the trying conditions through which the nation is passing, there is one need which transcends all others—it is the restoration of faith in men and in institutions. President Hoover has declared that "The issue before the country is the reestablishment of confidence." Malcolm Bingay, writing from Washington to the Detroit Free Press, stated that "We have the money, we have the food, we have the products, we have the organization; all that is needed is the breath of confidence, and that cannot come unless congress adjourns." To account for this lack of faith in our legislative body he stated that there are not more than fifty senators willing to place country above party.

Call to mind the measures which have been advanced for the purpose of meeting this need. Credit reserves for the relief of bankers and business men, loans to the farmer, federal bonds for the purpose of financing public works, the imposition of a sales tax, the boosting of the tariff, the rehabilitation of silver, payment of the soldiers' bonus and even the legalizing of the sale of beer, with the mayors of several of our cities so far forgetting their dignity as to lead beer processions. And yet what has led to the lack of confidence and the ever present apprehension and fear which retard the

wheels of industry and clog the channels of finance? It is not the absence of any of the panaceas proposed by our political and financial and industrial leaders. It is the revelation of the absence from our political and financial and industrial life of the most elementary principles of honesty and decency and fair play.

We are asked to have faith in government, and then we read of wanton extravagance and nepotism at Washington, of political chicanery in our state legislatures, of corruption and fraud in cities like New York and Chicago and even our own Detroit, where our city fathers seem to be intent upon playing politics, thereby

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undermining the credit of the city and jeopardizing the health and even the lives of its unemployed citizens.

We are urged to have faith in our financial institutions, and then we read of bankers utilizing the machinery of their respective banks for the purpose of building up great personal fortunes, thereby endangering the security of the funds entrusted to their care. More than four thousand bank failures in the United States within less than three years tells the story.

We are entreated to have faith in our business institutions, and then we read of the directors of one great corporation selling its stock to a selected group of its own officials and their friends at one-third of the market price and then, when the depression carried the stock down to one-fourth of the price paid, reimbursing them for their loss with interest at six per cent.

We are exhorted to have faith in the vast system of credit upon which modern business rests and so assist in its restoration, and then we read of the way in which that credit has been used for the enrichment of those in control rather than for the benefit of society as a whole. How can there be any restoration of faith in our political and industrial and financial institutions as long as such revelations follow one another in quick succession?

What we are witnessing today is not an economic breakdown, it is a moral breakdown. It is not the collapse of our industrial system, but the destruction of our national morale. The restoration of faith cannot be brought about by any political hocus-pocus or economic legerdemain. It can be brought about only by the revival of such old-fashioned virtues as honesty and decency and fair play. The confidence we need to reestablish is not in government but in our government officials, not in banks but in bankers, not in our industrial system but in our industrial leaders, not in institutions but in men. Without the reestablishment of such confidence we shall look in vain for the resumption of business and the return of prosperity. As Walter Lippmann has said,"The mischief is not curable by laws. The mischief is in the realm of the spirit, in the loss of restraints against the lust for profit, in the submergence of all other conceptions of what life means by the greedy desire to get rich quickly."

A Threefold Challenge

Such a situation presents a threefold challenge. First of all, it is a challenge to the nation itself. It is a poor patriot who will not die for his country. Such willingness has been glorified in poetry and song, yet it is the poorest test of patriotic loyalty and devotion. Issue a call to arms, summon men to fight for their country's honor and good name, and thousands will rush to the recruiting station eager to enlist and pour out their life blood in defense of the land they love. But bid them discharge, intelligently and faithfully, the duties of citizenship, study public questions, encourage reform, vote and vote intelligently for both men and issues, accept public office as a public trust, insist upon honesty and justice and fair play in our political and social and industrial life, and their enthusiasm wanes. If the country had called for some great thing, something involving difficult service or costly sacrifice, they would have done it. How much more then when it bids them, Wash and be clean?

The second challenge is to the church. Can we, as representatives of organized religion, waive all responsibility for our present situation? Have we been accustomed to put first things first, to prefer duty to expediency, service to popularity? While we have been quibbling over dogmas and creeds or busying ourselves with the elaboration of ceremonies and rites the moral fabric of the nation has been so impaired that civilization itself is imperiled. Does it mean nothing that many of the men whose moral delinquency has been responsible for our present situation are not only members of churches in good and regular standing, but often occupy conspicuous official positions? If there is to be a moral clean-up campaign, it must begin at the very door of the church. Speaking upon "What We Have Lost Since the War," Rabbi Silver, of Cleveland, has named as chief among these losses the loss of moral

certitude, the shattering of our moral principles, the disappearance of any authoritative moral code. In the absence of any universally accepted moral standards, the individual is thrown back upon himself. As in the days of the Judges, every man does what is right in his own eyes.

Religion Is the Key

Where shall we look for the reestablishment of some authentic basis for the moral life if not to religion? To what shall we turn for the restoration of faith in men and in institutions if not to the church? Religion is neither a dogma to be believed nor a rite to be performed. It is a life to be lived—the life of unselfish love and self-forgetful service. If the church is to contribute to the solution of our present problem, it must, as President Wilson once said, seek out the individual in the midst of the complexities of our present day civilization and bring him face to face with his corporate responsibility. Wrong does not become right simply because it is perpetrated by a great corporation. Dishonesty does not become honesty simply because it has received the sanction of a board of directors. If we are to reestablish confidence and restore faith, we must create the conviction that our politicians are putting the welfare of city or state or nation above partisan advantage or personal gain, that our business men are motivated by the ideal of service rather than of profit, that our financial leaders are putting loyalty to their trust and security for trust funds above the attainment of wealth or power. In other words, we must convince men that once more honesty and decency and fair play have become characteristics of our American life.

To quote Mr. Lippmann again: "It is not only against the material consequences of this decade of drift and hallucination, but against the essence of its spirit that the best and bravest among us are in revolt. They are looking for new leaders, for men who are truthful and resolute and eloquent in the conviction that the American destiny is to be free and magnanimous, rather than complacent and acquisitive."

A Clean Citizenship

Last of all, the present crisis presents a challenge to us as individual citizens. What can we do to provide a remedy? Nothing great, nothing spectacular, nothing that will minister to self-glorification—but everything that will insure quiet, unassuming, yet faithful service. Only too often the sins of the leaders are simply the sins of the common people writ large. We cannot condemn in others what we condone in ourselves. We cannot but admire the spirit in which the actor Sothern sought to revive an interest in the Shakespearian drama. When criticized for trying to render Hamlet while the memory of Booth was still vivid, he replied: "To be compared to Booth, to be mentioned in the same breath with him, is indeed a terrible ordeal; but what will become of the drama if no one tries?"

The world is waiting for men and women who are willing to make some appreciable sacrifice if thereby the kingdom of God can be brought one step nearer. We may not be able to serve our country as illustriously as did the great ones in the past, but what will become of the nation if no one tries? We may not be able to serve the church as efficiently as those who have gone before, but what will become of religion if no one tries? I do not know what answer the American people will give to this challenge, but I do know that upon that answer will depend the reestablishment of confidence and the restoration of faith.

In the ringing words of J. G. Holland,

God give us men! The time demands
Strong minds, strong hearts, true faith and willing hands—
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking.
For while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps!
Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps!

Repent Ye!

By E. G. Homrighausen

From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matthew 4:17.

EVERYONE is looking for an adequate authority. Life is so constituted that it must have a dominant loyalty. Men are like sheep in need of a shepherd. Life is meaningless and drab unless it has a lofty star to hitch itself to. How bewildered we are as we go from one interest to another in the hope that somewhere we might find the one authority which we can trust, which will really redeem us from this world of change and decay.

One by one the new authorities which we appropriated in recent years have gone "the way of all flesh." These pretentious authorities of science and culture—yes, and of a humanized religion—have been deflated by the hard and brutal realities of human existence. Little gods which we made out of our ingenuity and intelligence—expedient and controllable gods—have proved powerless in the terrible crises. The whole coterie of supreme authorities, from the god of a classical culture, on through the gods of the process of inevitable evolutionary progress and a divine-human reason, to the latest absolutized relativity—all have gone the way of the lesser gods. Little national gods, social gods, party gods, denominational gods, all provincialized deities, are simply powerless to deal with even so small a matter as an unemployed family! For

one unemployed family not only involves the parties themselves, but the whole question of labor in a world that has become an intimate family. Only the one universal God is big enough for even the tiniest problem that now faces us. No wonder that, in every human interest today, there is a haunting and insane groping for some big, living, redeeming "Word." A solipsistic "loneliness of individualism," of blind irrationalism, of cynical agnosticism that has explored every possibility of human emotion is at its wits' end, but will not admit that from the human being out there is no hope. Man cannot help himself out of his fatalistic environment. No wonder men are living on as best they can, taking what they can grab, for a terrible fear haunts them that after all there is nothing in, with and beneath life like a Benevolent Intelligence. Rather they secretly feel that, after all, the world is a meaningless jumble of chaos, in which human intelligence is an unfortunate emergence!

While the majority of people have not gone this far, many of them would have to admit that the fire, enthusiasm and hilarious recklessness of an adventurous faith is rare today. While people still get a great deal out of the old terms of religion, they are really worshiping the glory of an ancestral altar of words. When put hard to it, they will have to admit that they have lost much of the radiance of the faith which those old altars sought to express. The sense of present living authority is gone. And it is lost to more people than we realize, and in many who are afraid to admit it.

I

How different it was with Jesus, and with the disciples who wrote the gospels about him! In the text which we have quoted, Jesus is confronting his age with a tremendous manifesto. It is the manifesto of one who knows what he is about. He came preaching —proclaiming. And to preach or proclaim one has to have a sure standpoint. One has to know what one is preaching. He has implicit trust and living faith in the authority of the reality he champions.

From beginning to end, Jesus was dominated by one authority—God! He did not approach his age with an argument on religious philosophy, in the hope that he might make his *idea* of the kingdom of God reasonable to men. He did not come conversing in vague and uncertain terms about God and the kingdom. He did not come debating the rationality of the kingdom. He did not come to establish forum centers to discuss the expediency of belief in God. He came preaching —"The kingdom of God *is* . . . !" It is an established fact! It is *the* fact that no man can evade, and which he instinctively knows when he hears about it. The kingdom of God touches man's deepest existence: the nature of ethical personality. It is not a theory or an idea, but a living reality which any man who has any personality at all knows.

God and the kingdom are not truths like other truths. They are not even to be compared with other ideas, kingdoms and gods. They cannot be discussed. They are not to be classified with the highest achievements or discoveries of men's minds. They are not subject to arbitrary treatment. They are not truths arrived at by intellectual syllogizing. They are not hypotheses which men prove or disprove by the powers of intellect. They are not subject to the changes of the kingdoms and gods of this world, whether these kingdoms and gods be of territory or of thought. They are a priori, unconditioned, eternal. They are fundamental realities over which men have absolutely no control—even as they have no control over the sun!

Jesus a Dogmatist!

Jesus is history's greatest dogmatist! Not the detailed dogmatist of our own age, whether of theology of science, but a dogmatist on God and man. Upon God's world of righteousness and love and man's world of sin and of selfishness. Those who would return to Jesus in the hope that they might avoid theology are of all people most blind. Even the Sermon on the Mount is built upon theology. He who would return to a simple ethical gospel of the peasant Jesus has to reckon always with theology. And with the dogmatic Christology of the great sermon too! "You have heard it said . . . but *I* say unto you." And he dares to say that whosoever builds upon his word shall possess a life of eternal significance. What is that but dogmatism?

How different is today's preaching from that of Jesus! People instinctively know that most preachers today are not touching bottom in their preaching. Mere discussion, essaying, is not preaching—like Jesus preached. How many preachers preach as did Jesus—without fear of contradiction? He would never budge on the subject of God and the kingdom! But in his preaching he never got onto the economist's, the philosopher's or even the ethicist's ground. He was a dogmatist on one subject: Personal existence, whether of God or man! For that reason folks never dared contradict him. If they did, so much the worse for them! How like Jeremiah! With back against the Eternal he cried into the wilderness of the world, even though it would not hear. But he was sure of his ground and that made him oblivious to the criticism and persecution of men.

Jesus Came Preaching!

He came preaching the prior world of God which alone gives sense and meaning to this world. He came preaching that life-world of God which alone can fulfill this world into integration, unity, power and dynamic. He came proclaiming the implicit kingdom of God that lies hidden beneath the ruins of this world and which has been vitiated by the demon of evil. He came disclosing the real world within ours, which we never could have fully found for ourselves. He came telling men—exegeting to them—about their real selves that lie buried and dormant within them. He came proclaiming to men the good news that they do not need to be enslaved and held prisoners by the prince of this world. He came to open the eyes of the human race that had been blinded by its own conceit, to make strong again the limbs that had been dwarfed by egotism, to release the imprisoned world made captive

by its own folly, to open the ears of men who had been deafened by the noise and din of their own braggery. He came revealing the world of God! The world of freedom, of glorious vistas of "far-off horizons," of health, of music! "He came talking God to us." He came proclaiming news extraordinary!

Never was Jesus' preaching dry. Never was his sermon an essay. Never were men bored by lectures when he talked. Never was he an intellectual dabbler in truths and interesting notions. Never did he stoop to make God and the kingdom reasonable. Never did he stoop to the plane of an intellectual apologist. Never were his sermons aimed to produce naturalistic adjustments of life to a process. Never was his preaching sociology, or economics, or psychology as such. Never did he settle the issue between idealism and realism. Never was his preaching merely dry teaching and never was it related to the mere psychological processes of humanity. Certainly these things entered into his preaching. But always they were subject to the *one authority:* God and his kingdom. The human element in his preaching is not the most important thing about what he said or did!

God Wants to Break Through!

In all of his preaching there is the tension of a great moral struggle. He is enlisting men to take an active part in it. Two worlds are in deadly conflict, the world of God and the world of evil. His appeal is always to faith, to following, to decision, to action. There is always the youthful spirit of urgency in his acts and his speech. Haste, urgency, crisis! There is a sovereignty standing in its own right, ready and eager to break into men's lives, ready to substantiate itself by its own validation. His sermons and conversations are all vibrant with a stupenduous disclosure. God wants to break through to men. He wants to claim his world! His world is straining like a strong man in chains to be released into freedom. God wants something to happen to men!

A Great Possibility wants to become actual in man's impossibility. A Great Emancipation wants to eventuate in man's imprisonment. A Great Affirmation wants to devour man's doubt. A Great Transcendence wants to make a lie of man's limiting existence. A Great Miracle wants to deny law. A Great Life wants forever to swallow up man's death. An Easter wants to shatter our Calvary-tombs!

God wants to come to men. The kingdom is at hand! The incredible wants to become true. The Truth, Life, Light wants to break in upon man's dark world. A Vision Majestic wants to dispel our narrow outlooks bounded by the provincialism of death. There is no time to waste. Seek! Enter! Knock! Pray! Eat! Drink! Follow! In short, Repent ye! Receive ye! The authority of the kingdom and of God *is!* There is nothing you can do to prove or disprove that. That is sovereign. Men everywhere! Exercise the only authority that you possess—*Repent ye!*

II

That is the second great thing about this text. Not only is the kingdom prior and beyond human control, proof, or even human thought. But the only way to get into it is to receive it—to repent!

When Jesus said "Seek," he meant that men should have the sincere attitude of quest and not the attitude of the man who has found all, and who dogmatically sits down as though he had already apprehended. When he said "Ask," he meant that only those who are willing to admit that they do not know it all and are willing honestly to beseech God for himself will receive! Only those who have the absorbing attitude of drinking, eating, following, praying, can in any wise enter the kingdom. In short, *Repent ye!* Only thus will the kingdom come.

Repentance is a beautiful word. But it has been corrupted. It has been altered to indicate an attitude of one who has remorse for a terrible physical sin. And it has been associated with the weakness of the ascetic, monastic life, that negative attitude of one who denies the world and lives the life of a feminine recluse. It has often been associated with the spirit of absolute abasement. And what is worse, it has been so long associated with the extravagant emotionalism of revivals that it has lost all of its reality. Sob stuff! And repentance as expressed in the spirit of the mass psychology of hell-fire evangelists certainly is so abnormal as to make it undesirable, to say the least. In fact, it is dangerous! And often it is not real repentance at all, but a shallow emotionalism that wears off within a few weeks.

Repentance Not Weakness

Jesus never had this in mind. To him repentance is not weakness, but the highest creative activity of the human personality. It is not the spasmodic attitude of one who has committed a breach against the ecclesiastical mores. It is not a gush of sentimental emotionalism. On the contrary, to Paul, as to Jesus, it was a spirit of humble inquiry tinged with a moral coloring. It is a spirit of life that runs deep. It is a way of living. It is the constant attitude of discipleship, of receptivity, of servitude towards God and fellowman. It is a spirit of childlike trust over against God and a spirit of all-embracing sympathy over against the brother. In a social sense it is the constant recognition that all of us have need of each other, and that we are all involved in social guilt or salvation. It is the direct opposite of modern isolated and irresponsible individualism which " has no need of anyone." Over against God it is the embodiment of the phrase of the Lord's prayer, "forgive us our debts." It means constantly to realize that but One is good, but One is beautiful, but One is true. It means that we ought always to realize that whatever we know is subject to change and constant rethinking. It means to feel that we are sinners, imperfect ones; disciples that have constant need of teaching and forgiveness. Karl Barth puts it beautifully when he says that when a man lets Jesus talk God to him, he is repentant. And we might add that when he lets Jesus talk the brother to him, he is repentant too.

How repentant Jesus was! Though dogmatic, yet his dogmatism never rested in himself, or in his ideas

about God, but in the *reality* of God! Over against his fellows he always felt his identity with his fellows. He even had himself baptized, not because he had need for forgiveness, but because he constantly thought of himself as identified with men's sin as well as their aspirations. He felt his constant implications with his fellows in the world's evil atmosphere. He felt himself accountable. He was a member of mankind. He shared with them their common flesh and blood.

Repentance is forgiveness. It is teachableness. It is the spirit of mercy, of receptivity, of servitude, of

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sonship. It is the attitude of awareness and of expectancy and of wistfulness. It is the spirit of insufficiency, of dependency, of brotherliness.

III

But what of repentance today? How seldom is it preached about! It cuts against the grain of modern life even to mention the word. The pretentious self-sufficiency of the age has practically discarded it as even one of the techniques of salvation. Through a few centuries our spirit of independence has grown and grown until God has been relegated to those realisms of knowledge which we do not yet understand. We creatures have gradually made the Creator recede until he is thought useful only in those inevitable tragedies which temporarily baffle our ever-expanding knowledge and control. All of this development has gone to our heads! And we have gone so far as to mortgage the future, presume upon the creative powers of God for years in advance, and even to gamble upon it! And none of it is ours! We have mortgaged our futures, thinking they were in our own control. We have exploited our brothers and our lands and our lives without ever giving a single thought as to the fact that they all are gifts that are presented to us by the marvelous grace of God.

No wonder there is a spirit of practical atheism abroad in the land! Not the Ingersoll type of blatant agnosticism, but the spirit whereby men eat, drink, plant, reap, do business, etc., without ever giving a thought to God! Without ever giving him any consideration! Human powers have been transcendentalized and worshiped. Our youth have been fed success standards. Catchy slogans meet us on every hand, not to repent, but to express ourselves and be somebody and make a million, without any consideration as to what happens to God or the brother! Economics is a major study in colleges. The man of action is our idol. Even the churches have become glorified Rotary societies, and men scramble for the chief seats. The spirit of self-aggression is in the air and every new-born babe drinks it in his milk. The western world that does things, that possesses machines, in the true Hegelian sense has "arrived"! So we must evangelize the world—but our evangelism is in terms of machines and bathtubs, and even the missionaries think that to give a "heathen" a bath and tell him to make something of himself is to make him a Christian! It is no wonder that our Russian friends think of the engineer as the chief priest and the economist as the prophet of the kingdom, "Terrestrial messianism!" And repentance?

Jesus Made a Farce

Jesus is the hero, the master! The master business man of all times! The master at those techniques which make man full of abundant life. How he could handle men! If he came to America he would be the manager of some efficiency bureau. And what a social reformer he was! He is the romantic camp leader of youth, the Y. M. C. A. secretary who puts on wonderful programs. He is the master of self-expression. What a man!

But what of repentance—that chief characteristic of all his preaching and practice—that downright demand he made on all his followers without one reservation—that supreme human authority without which the kingdom of God never comes?

The bitter truth is that all of our modern developments have made us forget the fact of sin, the fact of need on our part! Sin is no theory, it is stark reality. But a generation that has put itself upon the throne, and has dissolved everything that once was beyond in the acids of imminence, was bound to forget the fact of sin, social and individual. With it went the reality of guilt, and men became little gods who needed but a little guidance to become like God! Redemption was laughed out of court. There was no need of repentance, that critical right-about-face which turned a man's whole life around from self to God! *This is finally at the root of every one of our modern problems.* Our trouble is not that science and modern thought make it impossible for us to repent, or believe in its worth. Our trouble is that we do not want to

repent, and we use science and philosophy as a convenient alibi. We humans have never been willing to admit that we belong to Another and to each other. Our worst enemy has always been our selfish ego. It is that ego which killed Jesus!

Salvation a Gift

But when we really face Jesus—not as a theoretical student faces a subject—but when we face him *and let him really face us,* we will see just what we are and what we need. We think we can get by without repentance just because we have been externally moral. We have not committed any grievous sin, we haven't murdered anyone, we haven't brazenly held anyone up, we haven't been in jail! But that shows how wrong our conception of sin really is. To Jesus the worst sinners are not the residents of Sodom or Gomorrah, not those taken in adultery, not those guilty of profiteering graft. He never condoned their sins. But the worst sinners are those externally respectable folks who often follow religious customs, but who possess the attitude of pride, of conceited piosity, of unbrotherliness, of indifference, of superior religiosity—dogmatists of conduct or thought. These proud folks who strut around in the garments of righteous ecclesiaticism. These smug individualists who have need of none, and who pride themselves on keeping clear of the sins of the common rabble!

No wonder Christianity has always claimed that *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And if salvation has come into the experience of anyone, it is a *gift,* and therefore none has any business to boast about his piety! *We are all receivers and not creators*! We are all *vessels* and never are we the *content* of the vessel! Every creed and every doctrine and every institution is but a vessel, and as such it has nothing to boast about. It belongs to the whole world of relatively *created* things! We are only sowers and planters of the seed, cultivaters of the soil. The increase comes from God. We cannot control the sun. All we ever do is to use it and channel its light and its power. And then only when we submit to its laws. So we are forever disciples who must learn, and never teachers who sit in the chair of God. Forever waiters upon his grace and his love, and never dispensers. We are forever being saved, and never saviors!

It is when men forget, as they have in recent years, that all that they have is the gift of Another, that they bring a judgment upon themselves. God does not do it! His just laws were given for the benefit of mankind. But when man injects his malevolent and selfish and unrepentant will into that order, he brings the judgment upon himself. But even then the mercy of God is greatest when his judgment falls hardest. Even on Calvary his love shines brightest. It is when man forgets that the earth and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein, *are the Lord's* and he uses them for his own selfish ends, that he is in for an end of his world. It is when he forgets that even his brothers, and the minerals of the earth, and the seeds of the field, and the harvest thereof, and the capacities of his own personality are God's, and not his, that he involves himself in a terrible depression. It is when he ruthlessly takes things into his own hands without asking the why and the wherefore that he has to stand and take the consequences of his own folly, and bring suffering to countless of the "least of these." Our whole trouble today is not a matter primarily of budgets and boards and loans and relief, but a matter of *man and his God!* We need a new spirit! Man has forgotten his place and his station. He has forgotten repentance. He has wanted to be the master, the Lord, the controller. He has aspired after *the throne.* And we are all learning—the church too—that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

Repent ye! That should be the cry of every last minister and the text of every last church. Only thus can God and his kingdom come into the world with power. Only thus can the church again become the womb which bears the kingdom children into the world! Only thus can the church be saved—there is no other way. Plans and programs and drives will only aggravate the situation, unless with them all the church is willing to repent and give God the glory. That alone will cure. Only as she lets her physical existence become transparent to the existence of God can she again take the place of the oracle of God to a bewildered world. Only as she embodies the "suffering servant" can she mediate the kingdom. Only thus can she become the beloved Bride of her God.

The Insignificant Exalted

It is not without significance that the Bible exalts the small and insignificant things. Fools are made heroes. Those who throw themselves away are saved. Those who dare ridicule and go west not knowing whither—these save themselves, bless mankind, and see afar off the glorious city whose builder and maker is God! Zaccheuses who are despised by nation and city become sons of Abraham indeed. And poor Lazaruses who are considered of no account become reasons why rich men are found in future places of torment. And babes born in lowly obscurity, having nowhere to lay their heads, surrounded by simple folks, dying shamefully and buried in borrowed tombs, rise gloriously to become the sons of the living God. Sauls who go down to extinction, and throw aside every vestige of proud rabbinical and self-righteous pharasaism, come through to become flaming apostles of God, whose names are engraved on a million hearts and in the heart of God. The poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the persecuted and the hounded, these, rather than kings, have an audience with the King of Kings! Those who die for him, live! Those who weep, rejoice! The repentant ones, the seeking ones, the following ones, the trusting ones—they enter the kingdom! And through them the kingdom enters the world.

Karl Barth is right! Our trouble is not that there is no help for us today. The help is but a hair's breadth away. It is within us, even outside the door of our lives. Our trouble is that we are too proud in our conceit to open the door. Not yet have we gone

far enough to admit that there is but one hope for us, and that is God! The King is at our gates! We did not put him there. Over his sovereign person we have nothing to say. But we do have a remarkably sovereign power: *We can open the door.* And that is repentance!

Less of the spirit of throne-seeking, more of the spirit of cross-bearing! Less self-sufficiency, more humility! Less Pharasaism, more publicanism! Less bossing, more obedience! Less teaching, more learning! Less of man, more of God! Less of this pride in the works of our hands which are after all works of God, and more of the spirit that day by day extols his wonderful love and grace without whom we could not live one single second, without whom we are poor and naked and blind and dead!

O God, raise us from the dead. Come, Lord Jesus!

Listening To God

By Harris E. Kirk

And Jesus said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest for a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. *Mark* 6:31.

A HEBREW prophet, brooding upon some of the qualities of the coming Messiah, makes him say: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of a learner, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." That is what our world is waiting for—the man who knows how to utter the seasonable word. But the source of this power is more important still: "He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as a learner." The power of seasonable speech comes from the ability to listen to God. Heraclitus used to say that nature had a voice, and if man could learn how to listen, he would hear and understand it: "but eyes and ears make bad witnesses for such as have barbarian souls." George Gissing has remarked that "most of the great deeds that have benefited mankind have been done by those who had learned how to lead a life of thoughtful stillness."

It is this that draws me to these words of Jesus, because they remind us of one of nature's controlling laws—the periodicity of life; and inasmuch as this teaching accords well with our present understanding of nature, we may turn to it in search of an illustration of the principle.

I

It was a wise teaching of Plato that visible things are symbols of invisible realities. Thus, the laws of nature suggest the more subtle laws of mental and spiritual experience. Now one of nature's most conspicuous habits is the law of periodicity. The coming and going of the seasons, the orderly procession of nights and days indicate this. All things are subject to this law. At first, nature seems entirely interested in energy and activity, but a closer view shows that every energetic manifestation is conditioned by periods of rest and quiet. Every stream has its eddy; the tides of the ocean have their ebb and flow. The swiftest moving particles at the heart of the atom are conditioned by this law. Eddington reminds us of one of the primary laws of radiation, which states that "the absorbing power of substances is proportional to the emitting power, so that the best absorbers are the best emitters."

The potency of this law, however, appears in the domain of life, for here periodicity is measured according to the quality and refinement of an organism. And what is even more important in the domain of bird and animal life, some demand is made upon intelligence for obedience to this law. Dr. Peabody of Harvard tells an interesting story of a Cambridge naturalist who took a pigeon that had been born and brought up in captivity and threw it into the air. To his surprise, the bird's flight was perfect, but when it tried to alight on the ground it came down on its head. This proved that the ability to fly was instinctive, while the capacity to stop can only be learned from experience. Ability to get back safely on the ground is, I am told, the most difficult aspect of the science of aviation.

It is, however, in the domain of human life that this law of periodicity plays the most important part. Here wisdom and experience rather than instinct must govern absolutely. It is natural for man to express himself in energy, but the ability to stop, the capacity for rest and recreation must be acquired from reflection and experience. Disregard of this elemental law leads to definite and deplorable results.

Oriental philosophers, puzzled by the complexities of western civilization, are fond of telling us that we know how to work, but do not know how to play. We express life in energy, but ignore its contemplative aspect, on which account we are absorbed in the particulars and are indifferent to the ends of existence. This is probably an overstatement, still it contains a profound warning for the western man.

A disturbing feature of American life is the presence at all levels of a certain kind of fatigue. Physical and mental fatigue are temporary phases and pass from the mind without leaving any trace of depression. But it is otherwise with a type of emotional fatigue so common in our country at the present moment. This type of weariness is not due to overwork, but rises from depletion of emotional reserves; it closes the channels of expression and is confined within congested areas, where it produces all kinds of worries and anxieties which do not easily yield to treatment. Science has traced the evil to its primary source. It is found neither in the muscular nor nervous system, but in the mind itself. It is a definite type of mental sickness, develops a peculiar kind of morbid sensitiveness and expresses itself in disorders, frequently of abnormal character. But a sick mind will eventually make the body sick, and set up various functional disturbances in an otherwise healthy organism. There is a proverb to the effect that "a man can carry his

infirmities, but a wounded spirit, who can bear?" This type of fatigue attacks the morale of the mind, and wounds the spirit in ways that make it incapable of facing the normal demands of life.

This type of psychological sickness can be directly attributed to the tendency to identify life with energy and ceaseless activity. It is the penalty of violating the law of periodicity. Unless we can recover the balance between work and rest, between energetic striving and quiet modes of living; unless the modern man can find in the atmospheres of culture and faith a fresh quickening of vitality, the outlook upon the immediate future is not as encouraging as it might be, if judged only in terms of our material progress.

II

This is *the* problem awaiting the younger generation. For the test of an educated man is ability to meet emergencies, to stand up to the pressure of life under the conditions that prevail. All round us people are asking for a seasonable word, to give solace to a weary spirit, but where is the man who knows what that word is? Who has the right word in philosophy, economics, science, government, and social order? To what type of man can society look to give reasonable answers to the profoundly disturbing problems of the modern world? No generation ever had finer tools. The resources of the material universe are almost wholly at the service of the man who knows how to use them, but our ability to develop balanced personalities is not keeping pace with our power to control the energies of nature. The uncertainty of control, doubt as to how man will use these powers, tempts many to lose confidence in the tools for efficient living, and increases the desire to come into communion with something more in accord with the subtle and refined aspects of human nature. It is not enough to be a trained intelligence, capable of performing efficient service in a specialized direction: we must aspire to become disciplined personalities; for character, as Emerson has well said, "is not talent, but the power to get your talent trusted." Thus amid life's crowding duties comes again the old great word: "Come ye apart into a desert place and rest a while."

This lesson is taught in a little known book, Cato's "Roman Farm Management," which contains some of the best principles for the cultivation of the soil. The author sums them up in these—*deep plowing and fallowing*. These principles go further than agriculture, and suggest rules for self-development. Look for a moment at the intellectual output of intelligent American minds at the present moment. With all its admitted excellences, much of it represents a hasty skimming over the surface, and how little seems the fruit of leisurely intellectual incubation. The strident, bitter, and cynical spirit that vitiates so much of the popular type of writing and thinking can only increase the strain upon minds already close to the breaking point. Apart from the profounder aspects of scientific research, the intellectual product of the present betrays little of that deep plowing which alone can bring the mind into communion with the profounder aspects of truth. Haste and waste, superficiality and shallowness in respect to guiding principles, are far too common aspects of much that passes for knowledge. The younger generation must develop a profounder and more leisurely dealing with the fundamental problems of life, if it is to command the respect of the modern world.

For even a casual scrutiny of our thought processes reveals an indifference to Cato's second principle—the law of fallowing. The modern mind often resembles nothing so much as a hard driven field, wherein

HARRIS E. KIRK

through continuous cultivation every particle of its vitality has been expended in immediate production. That is why so much that passes for wisdom is harsh, declamatory, and cynically critical. For noise anywhere is waste energy. The destructive forces are noisy, the building forces are quiet and deliberate. Hastiness means insecurity at the center; a declamatory style is an unfailing sign of lack of assurance. There is an Arab story to this effect: "Who is he that shouts loudest about his fish in the market place? He who knows that his fish are good, or he who suspects that his fish are bad?" Many are telling us that our world is in a state of meaningless flux, that life is a sorry business, and that the universe is turning out to be a thing of shreds and patches. There are those who say that no good can come from our social order, and that western civilization is on the decline. These depressing impressions suggest a thinness of soil, a rootlessness of life than can have no value for all who take the world seriously. Such minds have exhausted their slender capacities in a passion for immediate production and lost the vision of the ends of life.

Our time needs a different type; a culture which, while sympathetic to vocational education, is capable of passing beyond the conception of usefulness to fix itself firmly in the fertilities of an intensive philosophy of wholes. To such a mind, the present world, although manifesting many aspects of change, will suggest more hopeful things—the rise of a spiritual philosophy upon the mature results of science, an evolution of a wider international hospitality among the peoples of the world, the appearance of broader concepts of social unification out of the seeming chaos of the time. These encouraging visions are open to all who know how to live a life of thoughtful stillness, who have learned how to keep the independence of solitude in the midst of the crowd.

III

The principle suggested by the words of Jesus is that the spiritual aspect of life is fundamental to all the rest; that while it is manifested in public acts, it is nourished chiefly in private relations. Returning from a successful work, the disciples are invited to go apart into a desert place and rest a while. That was not an invitation to idleness, but an intimation that until they had brought their work into communion with the all-embracing whole of life, it was not complete. It was not finished until it could be interpreted and rightly related to the ends of existence. The Bible is full of such intimations. "Be still, and know that I am God." "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." "He that believeth shall not make haste." The universe is full of voices, and none of them without significance, but only a sensitive mind is fitted to discern among them, that one voice which alone can guide it to the center of spiritual reality. That is why Professor Hocking has said that religion as such has no utility whatsoever. Its function is that of "perpetual parentage," the prime source of all usefulness.

Only when culture is centered in the spiritual aspect of life does it become an energy, which enables a man to sustain his independence and authority amid the welter of life's teeming turmoil, without loss of courage or confidence in his cause. That too was the prophet's meaning in speaking of the Messiah. The ability to speak a word in season to a weary heart comes directly from the capacity for listening to God. "Morning by morning, thou wakenest mine ear to hear as a learner"—that is the secret of an enduring influence. Properly to appreciate it will open the way to two great experiences:

First, it brings the whole nature of man in touch with the whole nature of God. We become conscious of our undreamed of capacities, our unsuspected affinities for high and holy things, and as the sense of mystery within ourselves adds dignity to life, we become aware of the greater mystery which encompasses us. By these means man gains a foothold in time, because he has discovered a foothold beyond time. From the heart of the Hebrew Psalter we hear voices like these: "When thou saidest, seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." . . . "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Such spirits were able to stand firm in face of the hard facts of experience, because they were conscious of a vital communion with the living God.

Second, it enables us to hold our faith in our fellowman, and in our time, in face of the distressing aspects of the world. We have all passed through Dante's dark wood in the last ten years. We have savored the post-war disenchantments; we have denied too much, cast aside too much, and become so involved in tumult and stridency as to become almost stone deaf to the finer voices of the age. The need for a return to deliberate methods of thinking is paramount, if we are to clear the way for enduring and constructive solutions of our problems. Man has never been willing for long to accept a negative conception as a final register of human meanings. He will not forever be content with impressionistic denials. The time comes when the human spirit must affirm itself, when people look about for those strong, quiet, well balanced minds who know the pathway to peace. The past is eloquent with the truth that the spiritual man alone has had the seasonable word, and that he gained it through listening to God. The present is slowly putting aside its negations. There is a new seriousness abroad, a disposition to reconsider religion as the final solution of the world's needs. If you are willing to take this word of Jesus seriously, you will go far towards giving the time the leadership that it needs. This type of leadership has well been described by C. M. Doughty, the Arabian traveler:

> The future belongs to those communities in which the qualities are dominant, which swell and sanctify the souls of her best sons; that thrust them on and with them impell the body of the people as a tide towards the best that human nature can attain to.

Unto which then among the many significant voices should we give heed? What word shall most clearly enable us to understand the mind of God? One of the truly great passages in ancient literature is in the "Phaedo" of Plato. Socrates had affirmed with splendid certitude his faith in immortality. But Simmias found it impossible to share it, but went on to say that in face of a belief so desirable, the right course to pursue would be to take the best thoughts of the best minds in the world and make a raft of them which might carry a man through the floods of life, unless he could find somewhere a word of God in which he could confide.

This was a wise conclusion and my closing word shall be in harmony with it. Listen, then, to the best minds of all ages, but remember that among them all is the Voice of Jesus Christ—the Word made flesh—speaking from the center of human history, such words as man has never heard before or since. Here in my judgment is the Word more strong than any raft composed of the best thoughts of the best minds, and we may well be content to confide in it, for by listening to Jesus we shall develop the persuasion that we are listening to God, and in the quiet places of the soul we shall find the pathway that leadeth unto life eternal.

"Strong Drink"

By James A. Richards

Wine is a mocker; strong drink a brawler. Proverbs 20:1.

IT IS some surprise to me to find myself using this text. For many years it was associated with the rather sentimental and overwrought temperance teaching common about two score years ago against which I had experienced a violent adolescent revolt. Then it was largely forgotten while attention was exclusively focused on the political aspects of the matter. But now the wheel has gone full circle and the sentence comes back to stand at the head of this talk. It comes back as a sober and accurate statement of important truth.

You see at once that I plan to go deeper than the discussion of prohibition as a political measure. But I cannot entirely pass that matter by. In this connection the American public is being treated to a vast amount of distorted propaganda, perhaps the greatest amount in its history with the single exception of the hysterical war days. I think that careless and unjustifiable statements are made on both sides, statements that represent the rationalizing of impulses and prejudices rather than calm arguments. But I am convinced that the charge lies against the prohibition opponents as it lies against no other organized movement of the day.

Was Prohibition "Put Over"?

We are told that prohibition was "put over." The facts refute the charge. No constitutional amendment was ever longer in preparation—not even woman suffrage. None was longer considered or more clearly foreseen by careful students of social tendencies. Few if any were more overwhelmingly adopted in house and senate, by the number of states adopting and by the size of the majorities in their legislatures. And most of the federal and state law makers who voted on it were not elected during the war but before it.

We are told that prohibition has not accomplished any good. It clearly has not accomplished all we naively expected nor all we wanted. But even my memory is too good not to know it has accomplished much. I was not out of short pants before I was well acquainted with the sight of reeling and falling drunkards. There are a great many high school students today who never saw one. It is replied that drinking is now done in private. Of course it is, but so was it then, plenty of it! The only fair reasoning is to compare public drinking now with public drinking then, private now with private then. Brought up in the clean town I was, I had only to be taken shopping in any neighboring city to see every corner ablaze with all the enticements of the saloon. Millions of our present high school pupils never saw a saloon or sniffed the odors it used to pour out in the street. It is replied that we have speakeasies. Of course, but so did we then—thousands of them. Once again, the comparison is not fair. Moreover it seems passing strange that the liquor interests should be turning heaven and earth and spending huge sums to overthrow prohibition if it has been as inefficient as they say, and one is either amused or annoyed when asked to believe that they are acting in the interests of temperance.

Prohibition and the Depression

We are told that prohibition explains the depression. That is only one step more foolish than it was for the prohibitionists to credit the prosperity of 1928 solely to prohibition. Both claims are foolish. But the heavy decrease in the national drink bill—a bill placed by Professor Irving Fisher at $6,000,000,000—and the diversion of that decrease from destructive to constructive uses, seems an especially poor way to explain depression. Moreover, any increase in the liquor traffic would be accomplished only by diverting expenditures from other industries, which would make the seeming benefits spurious. At the same time we have been seeing an astonishing phenomenon during this bitter depression. It is almost incredible that masses of our people have suffered so intensely with so striking a minimum of civil disturbance. This is an accomplishment of the first magnitude and many close observers—our own Whiting Williams among them—cannot explain it except by prohibition. It is certainly worth recalling that in the old days the first step of the authorities when civil disturbance appeared was always the closing of the saloons. That is an indication of the place of drink in social life not lightly to be overlooked.

We are told that the press is against prohibition. That is no lie. But what does it mean? Is the press often notable for social vision and opinion? Is the press American? When a movement was on foot—now unhappily postponed—to start a new and progressive national daily in New York, one of you protested that such a daily should be published not in New York but in the United States! The first concern of the big press is its urban readers and our big cities are the home of the liquor interests, the gangsters, the foreign groups and the social froth that feels it must have its cocktails. Moreover drunkenness did not use to be news. It is today. He will not think clearly who allows the press a mortgage on his mind.

Prohibition and Crime

We are told that prohibition is responsible for crime. The statement needs examination. To be sure prohibition has defined crime just as the robbery laws, in connection with which we have experienced our greatest recent increase in crime, define it. In this same sense the repeal of prohibition would decrease crime—just as would the repeal of the robbery laws. But some further things need to be noted in connection with this argument. The only legal way to prevent all crime in connection with drink would be to repeal every sort of attempt to regulate it. The traffic always has been the center of crime. It was that before prohibition. There is need to study the solid figures that tell of the decrease of certain crimes—notably sex offenses—that has accompanied the decrease in the use of drink. It needs to be asked whether the present

crimes associated with prohibition do not arise from the essential nature of the drink evil and disclose in striking form the sort of public enemy with which we are here dealing.

We are told that the re-establishment of the liquor traffic would yield revenue and lift corporation taxes off of business. That may be entirely true. The plan suggested is a three cent tax on every glass of beer. But where would it put the taxes? It would put them on the poor man and even more on his wife and children. I decline to say in this pulpit what I think of a plan like that!

Sumptuary Laws

We are told that prohibition is sumptuary legislation. There is truth in that statement and instruction in the long, sad history of all legislation of that kind. Here, to my mind, the opponents of prohibition have their strongest ground. But it is not possible to settle the question by the use of an adjective. I suppose the drug addict could make a case that he is afflicted by sumptuary laws. Attacks on prohibition, on this ground at least, run the risk of carrying one too far. It would seem to apply to all liquor legislation and carry on to the position that this traffic is no concern of government at all. Few opponents of prohibition are ready to go so far as that. They always have some substitute to offer against which this sumptuary objection would almost equally apply.

But for the realist all these pleas against prohibition have to meet one fact that all its opponents seem to avoid. Whether or not one is convinced that the prohibition amendment is the best method, we do seem to be committed to it for an indefinite time to come. For good or ill, the amendment of the constitution is not an easy matter. To repeal the 18th amendment not only have you got to get a two-thirds majority in both houses of the congress voting today about as dry as when the Volstead act was passed, but to block repeal the drys have to control only one house in each of 13 states. The little used convention method appears equally difficult. Prohibition may be repealed, but that event is still a long way off. It will clear a lot of dust and fog out of the air when once we realize that for the realist the question of the hour is not what we shall do *with* prohibition, but what we shall do *under* it.

Let us admit with all candor that prohibition has not been a complete success. Let us go so far to meet its opponents on their own ground as to point out that the substitutes suggested would not be complete successes either. Every suggested solution but one is too easy. Give us light wines and beer, and crime, disrespect for law, bootlegging, speakeasies, would still be here. If prohibition laws are violated at the national border it certainly would not decrease violation to throw the question back on the states and crisscross the land with lines inviting violation. Bootlegging has always gone on, although not always with a press to advertise it. It would still go on. If a tiger had one paw in my front door I don't see that it would improve matters to open the door a little further and

A Pastoral Prayer

By Herman F. Reissig

CREATOR and Friend, canst Thou who art so great understand us who are so small? Or is it because Thou art so great that Thou dost know each one of us? Shall not the infinite Mind, wise enough to create the universe, be also great enough to understand the need even of a lonely human heart? Thou art not as we are, O God. Our greatness is so little that scarcely can we know and remember a few friends. Thou art not as we are. We shall not set limits to Thy understanding and love. Grant to us in this hour the deep comfort of a sense of companionship with the heart of life. Invade our loneliness, Creator and Friend.

Accept, O Lord, our thanksgiving. Some of us give especial thanks that in troubled days we are sustained by spiritual resources nourished in us by home and church. God pity all men and women who, having lost their possessions, find life unendurable because life for them had meant an abundance of possessions. We know now that it is not blessed to be rich without and poor within; that the only unendurable poverty is the poverty of the soul. Grant us great hopes, great convictions, abiding faith. Save us from moral surrender, from loss of faith in our fellowmen, from doubt of Thy goodness; so shall we not be left poor, whatever circumstance may take from us. Strengthen us that we may always be, not unresisting victims, but conquerors through Him who loved us.

We are thankful that when we might have gone down into some deep valley of humiliation and shame, something, Someone, steadied us and kept us true. Deep is our thanksgiving that before it was too late we discovered something in life supremely worth living for. We bless Thee for the young men and women who worship here today. Teach them once more the secret of eternal youth—to give oneself to imperishable ideals.

To the Power that made us and sustains all things we commit ourselves, our homes, our loved ones, and all that we hold dear. We will trust and not be afraid. We will do our best and leave the issue in stronger hands than our own. Amen.

let him get his head and shoulders in, and I don't believe that many who advocate that strategy honestly believe it would work an improvement.

Only One Solution

Where, then, does this leave us? I have said that every suggested solution but one, even including prohibition, is too easy. What is that one solution that is adequate? It is so simple that you may smile at it. It is for men to stop drinking! I told you I was going deeper than the political discussion of prohibition. I do so now. There is just one final solution of the problem of drink. It is for us to stop drinking. Here at last the whole matter comes out into the daylight. If the American public is shocked at the evils of the present liquor situation, there is just one adequate way to cure them. Stop drinking! But that, you will be quick to see, throws us back at once on a prior question. It is admitted that it would be good for us all to stop robbing. Would it be admitted that it would be good for us all to stop drinking? If we are in doubt about that, no liquor laws will work well. If we are clear that it would be good for us all to stop drinking, the path is open. Perhaps my major interest in the Anti-Saloon league today is that it is getting over the assumption, once felt by many, that prohibition, unsupported by a clear general conviction that it would be good for us all to stop drinking, can satisfactorily settle the liquor problem, and is giving itself again to the education of the public mind on drink. There is the real battlefield in this whole matter. That is why I return to the old, old text, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler."

The moment one takes the position I do here, one is supposed to wear a long, thin face with hatchet features, an emaciated figure, a long black coat—even before breakfast—and a sort of stovepipe hat more wonderful than anything yet seen on land or sea. Superficially, I think I may claim not to fit the picture. I will go further and say that there has been a lot of temperance teaching fanatical to the last degree. I do not believe that every stray drop of alcohol that gets into a human mouth for some theological reason sends a human soul to hell any more than I believe that whenever the Jesuits, who so heroically explored our west, surreptiously sprinkled baptismal water on native children they sent little Indian souls to heaven. I stand where I do on this drink question because of evidence that has come to me just as objective and concrete as the evidence that has convinced me that it is foolhardy to drive an unlighted automobile at full speed in the dead of night, or to play with morphine, or to eat food laden with typhoid fever germs.

Alcohol is habit-forming. The Japanese hit it off exactly when they say, "First the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes the man." I have watched that. I never met a man who meant to be a drunkard or thought he would become one. But he took a drink, that drink took another, and presently drink took the man.

I could tell of this till the cows come home. There was Alec. He grew up in a Christian home. What a man he was—trunk like a Douglas fir, neck like a hydrant, arms like the arms of steam shovels, a fist like a vise, and so instinctive a gentleman that when at last he got back on the water wagon I delighted to have my little daughters climb all over him to listen to his tales of the seven seas that he had sailed. But oh the frightful years in between when drink took the man! He never meant them.

I think of the citizen I visited through prison bars and later buried a suicide with carbolic, and another suicide they fished out of the bay for me to bury. I think of the young man of good Scotch blood, the best linen salesman you ever knew, and how I used to hunt the saloons of a great city to find him till his best friend could see no future for him better than

James A. Richards

to go to the war and get himself decently shot. I have watched the custom of social drinking, largely at the responsibility of the ladies, burrow from set to set in a superior community, leave each set without having done much harm to many but often not without having gotten a final hold on at least one. Nobody intended it, but the drink had taken a man. That is the sort of objective, concrete experience that makes me say today, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler."

Makes Second-Rate Men

Then another reason. I admit that some play with drink without ever becoming drunkards. I have had close friends of whom that was true. But I never saw drink do them any good. Instead I have again and again seen drink turn first rate men into second or third rate men. I am against anything that does that. How often in the sick room has the doctor's first question been whether the patient drinks—perhaps

especially in pneumonia. At least twice on the road I have met automobile drivers who had been drinking. Neither was drunk. One wanted the whole road and, believe me, I let him have it. The other struck me. He was not drunk. He had taken so little he swore he had taken none, while all the time his breath marked every word he spoke as lying. Unlike motors, trains run on tracks. But the railways have their Rule "G" by which any railway operator either drinking or associating with those who drink is immediately discharged. A machine age cannot afford to let first rate men be made into second or third rate men. Yet more convincing is the obscuring of general efficiency and worth that drink can work. I think of a young professional man, finely born, finely endowed, finely educated, finely circumstanced. Everything forecast his rising to the top. He was no drunkard. But wine mocked all his hopes. I am against that which takes first rate men, glorious children of God, and makes them second rate, or third, or fourth.

Social Responsibility

Nor can social responsibility be left out of the reckoning. I have been reminded that this may apply especially to our women. They can dictate social procedure. Alcohol is not a stimulant. It is a depressant. It does not increase energy. It merely disorganizes our brakes. You know what happens when your brakes fail in traffic. Socially most of us are driving in thick traffic. Drink appears to increase energy because its action is like knocking the governor off an engine. The seeming increase of energy soon knocks the engine to pieces. None of us is too well controlled. Most of us have enough points where we are rather evenly balanced between decency and license. That is why even moderate drinking, even a single drink, has led many to do things regretted forever after. Wine mocked them into brawling.

Nor is that all. You cannot be sure that what you play with will not mock you in the end. Neither can you be sure that what you get others to play with will not mock them in the end. You may escape, but your companion may go under. Serve drink to another, by example or by easy tolerance, encourage another in its use, and you may push another along a path from which you turn back, but that leads that other to results that I have feebly pictured. Any compromise with drink makes you an ally with the gangster, the bootlegger and much of the crime and lawlessness of the hour—strange company for some polite and otherwise decent church members I have known! An alliance at the front door with all that is high and uplifting, and at the back door an alliance with all that debases the government and ruins men and women!

There is just one final solution of the drink problem with which civilization has always struggled and we have temporized too long. It is to stop drinking. It is to compromise no longer with our habit-forming enemy that mocks and brawls and that, even though it may hurt you but little, may pass through you to the damnation of others and to turn into second and third rate men those who were born to be first rate, to be brothers in Christ and glorious children of God.

Revive Thy Work!

By Merton S. Rice

O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. Habakkuk 3:2a.

HERE is the earnest prayer of a prophet in the midst of a trying day. He turned through and out of it all, and called for what he fully believed to be the real deliverance. "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years!"

I have always believed that the greatest danger involved in any problematic period of life is the spiritual danger. We do not list it on our market reports. We call crisis years the years when stock and bonds go tumbling in quotations. We are slaves of economics. Keep our markets strong and you cannot write crisis across our day. We however have come to realize of late that there is a stifling atmosphere about prosperity which chokes some finer things than mere economics.

Spiritual Peril the Gravest

Amid all the other crowding perils of this troubled hour through which we have been conscripted to carry the story of human progress, I am sure the spiritual peril is the gravest. It is not now for great civic reforms, and great industrial reforms, and great social reforms, and many more upon which we so easily can persuade folks to spend their enthusiasms, that I am to direct attention. Not that I do not favor the very highest development of every good ideal, but because I am fully convinced that the heart and hope of all good reform in this world lies in a genuine application of spiritual religion to the ways of man. I have been reading some very excellent historical estimates which boldly declare that the Wesleyan revivals actually saved England in that hard day from the very same fate which crushed France in her red revolution. In the light of what had been done, I dare, in the face of what needs doing, to declare my faith in the same gospel they had, and in the same Christ they preached, and in the same salvation they experienced, and in the same triumph they wrought.

There is a waiting place today for a giant figure in the church to appear. We must not walk carelessly now. We must not walk uncertainly. The issue is between God's truth which must be championed by his church, and ease and indifference, and skepticism, and materialism, and flagrant sin.

A Time for "Madness"

We must not be afraid of deserting our calmness. These are enlisting days. There can be no neutrality. We indulge enthusiasm otherwhere, in fact we require it. Enthusiasm, among salesmen, is made an essential. Why should we cool toward an enthusiasm for God's kingdom on earth? As someone has said, "Why should a gladiator be sane and St. Paul be mad?" I would say it modestly, and deny all comparisons personal that might seem to be involved in such a statement, but I

have come to a time in my ministry when I can at least understand the feelings of splendid old John Knox, when in a perfect agony of soul he cried, "O God! Give me Scotland or I die!"

Not long before his death our great psychologist, Prof. William James of Harvard, offered a very keen observation upon the condition of our evangelical faith when he said that the true spirit of the church evaporates under those able and rationalistic booklets with which we have in certain quarters begun to evaporate religion in intellectual terms. That is not an exact quotation, but it carries the meaning of a very penetrating observation.

I am not concerned as to what type the new revival shall be. I am no stickler for form, or phrase, or manner of its propagation. The term "old-time religion" is an easy term to use and a hard term to define. Religion is neither old-fashioned nor new-fashioned. It is not a question of fashion. It is little concerned with form. We are not doing other things as we used to do them. Why leave the expression of our religion to wear, alone of all our life expressions, the manners and ways of yesterday?

Certainties of Experience

I have a faith in Jesus Christ that cannot be outrun by any generation. I have faith in a gospel that cannot be laid aside by any problematic conditions that may arise. I am not for a Christianity that would be narrow, and severe, and conceited, and unprogressive. I would however have a living, aggressive, passionate church enjoying the communion of a personal Savior from sin. After having done my best to give consideration to every phase of the present day demand upon the church, and after having fought my own way through a mass of suggestions in emphasis, I have arrived at a conviction which was most vigorously announced by Dr. Dawson a few years ago in a phrase something like this: "Though much may have been shaken in the realm of thought, nothing has been shaken in the realm of experience!" I cling to the message of evangelism. The form of utterance may differ, but the manner of statement is not the issue. I am far more concerned about the actual salvation of the soul than I am to discuss the speculations about truth which after all may hold interest for but a very few and hold no ultimate help even to them. This I know, the power of Jesus Christ does save men, and that is enough to know: his gospel shall command all the power I possess.

We need not look afar to see a Nero fiddling while Rome burns. There are vast numbers today making less harmony than fiddling, as with some shallow thing they are seeking personal joy, while a world all about them is in the immediate peril of tumult and strife.

I would call, from the most compelling conviction I have ever known, for a new and consuming passion for the evangel to come over the church. Enough for us to know that we have been entrusted with the message that will bring the broken-hearted and the sinful to a sufficient deliverance. As never before, in my all too little ministry, do I see and appreciate the meaning of this commission. I have never doubted its worth. I have never questioned its surety. I have never feared its ability. I do now see it however as I never saw it heretofore, as truly underlying all the stability of government and the hope of every reform. These are days for the declarations of the great fundamentals of our beliefs, shorn of all our bickering contentions. Nations are in upheaval. Whole systems are in revolutionary change. Governments and law and order are in perilous criticism and protest. Revolution is no word to be carelessly bandied about this world now. What we need is a gracious and a genuine revival of the religion of Jesus Christ, a religion that will plant the life of God in the hearts of men.

MERTON S. RICE

"Awake! Awake! Put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord!" We are awaiting a consuming devotion to the task in which faith is unalterably set. Devotion to the faith has been the characteristic that has marked the outstanding ones in revived days. Bernard of Clairvaux, Anselm of Canterbury, Francis of Assissi, Luther, Knox, Wesley; these may not have agreed in many of the details of doctrine, but in devotion they were in perfect step. What would avail a noble ideal to a nerveless unheroic generation? But if the things we preach are true there can be no excuse for anything other than the most devoted work for salvation of a lost world.

Our Times a Challenge to Faith

Our times, we know, are disturbed. We are troubled by vast and clamoring problems which will either work out our deliverance from all trifling matters that have confused us from the real truth, or will plunge us into abject failure. The very peril of this demand-

ing hour is the irresistible challenge to our faith. It is not enough for us to have a sound system of social economics, important though that be. Well stated creeds and high-idealed politics are not enough. The most practical and virile principles will weaken and faint unless they be motivated in a character unique and irresistible because of an unbroken communion with God. This world never needed Jesus Christ more than now. That great deliverance will not be supplied by reading the splendid stories of the tireless characters who met the calls of other days.

Today, when every street corner is made an orator's platform for the proclamation of some social theory: today, when the press of the world is pouring out a flood of varied suggestions and speculations: today, when wild enthusiasm stamps men and women who eagerly seek every ear into which to cry their proposed doctrines: today when plastic nations and whole races of people are lying exposed to influences that can impress them: surely at an hour like this, we will not dare to fail as Christians to be solicitously loyal to our faith.

Jesus Sits by the Treasury

By Bruce S. Wright

Jesus sat over against the treasury and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury. Mark 12:41.

JESUS over against the treasury! We do not often look for him there. We prefer to see him in some other place, it is less embarrassing. We like to look upon him in Bethlehem. We love the Christmas story, we join in the Christmas songs, we delight in the sound of the Christmas chimes. Artists have vied with one another in their attempts adequately to portray the manger scene of long ago, with attendant shepherds, wise men and angels. We love to look upon Jesus in Gethsemane. It helps us when we remember that he had his dark hours, that there were moments when he did not know which way to turn, that he was tempted in all points like as we are, that he wrestled until dawn. We often see Jesus upon Calvary. We sing:

> There is a green hill far away,
> Outside the city wall,
> Where our dear Lord was crucified,
> Who died to save us all.

We love to look upon Jesus on Easter morn outside the tomb, triumphant over death and the grave. Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Calvary, Easter morn, and now we see him over against the treasury. There is no anomaly in that. It is vitally important that we see Jesus not only in Bethlehem and on Calvary, but over against the treasury, for one's attitude toward the Lord's treasury is a determining factor in one's religious sincerity.

Money and Worship

My theme is money. Conscious of Jesus sitting over against the treasury helps us in our approach to this theme. Seeing him there robs the subject of its sordidness and vulgarity. Henceforward, because Jesus sits over against the treasury, passing the offering plates is as worshipful an act as praying, preaching, singing, or reading the Bible. Jesus has a right to sit over against the treasury. He of whom we sing: "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe," is in his rightful place over against the treasury. He has a right to be at your elbow when you write your checks and sign them, when you receive your pay envelope and distribute its contents, when you invest your money, when you draw your interest, when you borrow or when you lend. He has the right to watch you. I rather think he is the only one who has. I am sure I have not. Money is a touchy subject. Money is altogether too fruitful in its ability to bring about misunderstandings in families, quarrels among friends, cases at court and upheavals in church. I am sure I do not have the right to pry into the money affairs of people, it is altogether too delicate a matter. But I am equally sure that Jesus is in his rightful place when he sits over against the treasury watching people cast in their money. Let us look upon this subject of money through the eyes of Jesus!

Getting and Spending

Sitting over against the treasury Jesus sees how people get their money. He knows all about excess profits, overcharging and gambler's luck. He knows whether people really earn their money or whether they somehow, by hook or crook, contrive to get it. He knows all about tainted money. A few years ago we heard a great deal of talk about tainted money. One minister remarked, "The only trouble with tainted money is 'taint enough." However, that remark was only an attempt at humor in dealing with a very serious subject. Two scientists made a series of bacteriological experiments on a number of banknotes which had been in circulation for a long time. The result of their experiments was sufficiently startling. On each banknote they discovered the presence of nineteen hundred microbes of disease—some of tuberculosis, some of diphtheria, and some of erysipelas. More than that, they found one bacillus peculiar to the banknote, a banknote microbe, so to speak, for it is found nowhere else; it fattens and thrives and multiplies on the peculiar paper of which the banknote is made. Here is a parable. The most dangerous bacillus clinging to money is the spirit that determines to get money, somehow, anyhow, honest or dishonest. Jesus knows, if no one else does, how men get their money.

Sitting over against the treasury Jesus sees how people spend their money. He sees people squander money upon silly, sensual, vicious objects, while legitimate needs are left to skimp along as best they may. One need not be a mollycoddle, one may still believe in boxing as a clean, wholesome sort of exercise, if rightly conducted, and yet hold the opinion that organized

boxing exhibitions constitute a fearful waste of money. New York city has spent in a single year twelve million dollars for so-called boxing exhibitions, while one hundred thousand of her children are denied proper school facilities. It is true that you do not spend your money at the gate of pugilistic contests, but that does not relieve you of the necessity of a careful analysis of your spending. Are the pleasures, recreations, hobbies and objects for which you spend your money productive of happiness to others as well as to yourself? Jesus sits over against the treasury, and he knows though all others may be ignorant.

Money Spiritually Defined

Sitting over against the treasury Jesus sees the importance of money from the spiritual standpoint. How seldom do we see that! I went to our Library and looked through the book titles on the subject of money. I did not find a book that considered money from the standpoint of spiritual responsibility and opportunity. There were books about exchange, taxes, coinage and kindred subjects, but not a line about the consecration of money. We have to turn to the Bible for that. In the Bible is a single sentence which defies and counteracts all those volumes of neglect. Malachi lifts his voice, and it is not a whining voice. He has not the dejected air of a beggar. His is a trumpet voice, and his attitude is one of authority: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Here you see money may become the most spiritual thing in the world. It may be the means of such an outpouring of heavenly blessing and earthly satisfaction as we have not experienced in many a day.

Sitting over against the treasury, Jesus saw the curse of money wrongly used. Long ago Moses came down from the mountain where he had been basking in the sunshine of God's presence and he beheld the shocking sight of his people falling down before a golden calf and worshiping it. He approached Aaron for permitting such sacrilege. Do you recall Aaron's answer? Aaron was an eloquent man, he was gifted in speech, he had a rich vocabulary, and these gifts he used to the utmost that day, as he said to Moses: "I put in gold and there came out this calf." Alas, people have been doing that ever since. Men have been putting in gold, and out has come the calf of idolatry, selfishness, sensuality, suicide, murder, disease, plague, destruction.

Money as a Blessing

There is a corollary to this. Jesus sitting over against the treasury sees the blessing of money rightly used. Money itself is utterly useless; it is what money can get and do that freights it with power. Money is only a symbol; it is what money stands for that transfigures it. Jesus can make money serviceable, he can transfigure it. Jesus conducts an exchange so that money may be blessed and rightly used. Traveling in Europe and in the Orient I have gone from one country to another, but always, crossing the border, it became necessary to exchange the money of the old country for the money of the new. There is the Jesus exchange of money. Through him money may be exchanged for men, women, children, hospitals, homes, service, love. There was David Livingstone. Think of the few thousand dollars required to send him to and keep him in Africa, then compute, if you can, the power of those few thousand dollars blessed by God. Thinking of the power of money, my mind travels across land and sea to a missionary hospital on the shores of Manila bay, where I see a little woman, Dr. Rebecca Parrish, cultured and consecrated, staying at

Bruce S. Wright

her post, through thirty years, and she is still there, helping, healing, blessing in the name of him who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto me." O the power and blessing of money put through the Jesus exchange!

Sitting over against the treasury, Jesus sees with just but sympathetic eye. He sees the motives of those who give. He knows who gives for show, those who give sincerely, those who give because others give. He sees those who give from their surplus, who are never hurt by anything they cast in, because what they have cast in has never cost them any sacrifice, they have never surrendered a single whim or desire that they might give. He sees those who like Mr. Micawber, owing Mr. Traddles forty-one pounds plus, could not conscientiously leave London without discharging that debt. He therefore went to Mr. Traddles and with great dignity and ceremony handed him a bit of paper containing his I. O. U. "Oh, yes, by all means let us pledge this amount we owe," we hear some say, but

their part in the pledge is a useless I. O. U. Jesus sees that the Lord's treasury suffers more because of the failure of the rich and well-to-do than from the failure of the poor to give. He sees that the test is not in what we give but in what we keep. His penetrating eye sees those who cast in much that cost them little, and those who cast in little that cost them much. He sees the widow's two mites.

The Two Mites Interpreted

Let me interpret these two mites, and I think I do no violence to Scripture to interpret them as I do. There were two mites, two pieces of money. Here is a severe test, for she must have been tempted to keep one mite for herself. I have two five-dollar bills. The possession of two fives rather than one ten is a greater test of my spirit of benevolence when appealed to for some worthy cause, for having two fives the temptation is to retain one for myself. I make bold to say that I see in the two mites which the widow gave the forerunner of our admirable duplex envelope system prevalent in the modern Christian church. One mite goes in one side of the envelope, that is for our local work; the other mite goes in the opposite side of the envelope, that is for the work of Christ in other fields at home or abroad. Then too let us straighten out this word mite! How often we say, or hear it said, with a show of pride, "I have given the widow's mite." Have we? What did she give? She gave her all, her living. Have we ever approached that? Many a stingy one had hid behind the skirts of that poor widow, trying to cover his stinginess with the statement, "I have given my mite." Again, the mite becomes mighty only when we put it to use. Idle money is useless money. Money becomes less valuable as the years come and go. The day will surely come with every one of us when money will not be worth a thing. "How much did he leave?" we often ask of a man who has died. "He left everything," is the answer. Wiser word was never uttered than Job's comment, "Naked I came into this world and naked must I go hence."

"There are three kinds of trouble in the world," says Thomas L. Masson, "money, others, yourself." The only way to get rid of the money trouble is to spiritualize the whole money question. Behold Jesus, sitting over against the treasury, watching us as we earn, spend and divide our money. Take him into partnership, pause a moment there by the treasury and talk with him, tell him all your problems and he will help you through your money troubles.

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The Creedless Love

A CREEDLESS love, that knows no clan,
No caste, no cult, no church but Man;
That deems today and now and here,
Are voice and vision of the seer;
That through this lifted human clod
The inflow of the breath of God
Still sheds its apostolic powers—
Such love, such trust, such faith be ours.

We deem man climbs an endless slope
Tow'rd far-seen tablelands of hope;
That he, through filth and shame of sin,
Still seeks the God that speaks within;
That all the years since time began
Work the eternal Rise of Man;
And all the days that time shall see
Tend tow'rd the Eden yet to be.

Too long our music-hungering needs
Have heard the iron clash of creeds.
The creedless love that knows no clan,
No caste, no cult, no church but Man,
Shall drown with mellow music all,
The dying jangle of their brawl;—
Such love with all its quickening powers,
Such love to God and Man be ours.

SAM WALTER FOSS.

The Anvil of God's Mercy

I WONDER that the metal stands the test;
The hammering of dogma, and of creed,
The lifting ferment of a world's unrest,
The battering of ignorance, and greed!
The dead-white flame of atheistic scorn,
The ringing blows of ridicule, and doubt;
The infidel's rough handling, and the worn
Deceits and prayers of the half-devout!
Yet still the anvil of God's mercy stands
Singing its answer to each heavy blow,
The stronger for humanity's demands—
And man bends on it, steadily and slow!

ANNA HAMILTON WOOD.

The Church Must Feed the Hungry!

By Johnston Myers

"GIVE ye them to eat," was a command of our divine Lord. It is just as appropriate in this age as it was when he first uttered it. A multitude of hungry people surrounded him. They had been listening to his teaching. It is likely that most of them were ragged and unwashed but he knew that they were hungry and turning to his disciples he said, "Give ye them to eat." It seemed an unpleasant and an impossible task. These disciples replied very much as the disciples of today reply, "Send them away and let other people provide for them or let them get food as best they are able." The disciples knew that Jesus would likely provide for them. When the multitude had gone away he who controlled all the food supply would find some way to provide for them. Jesus met their unwillingness to feed the hungry multitude by perhaps abruptly and somewhat sternly saying: "These people are not to be sent away nor are any others to provide them with bread. You are the people to feed them." In a few moments he had arranged them in groups. Then he multiplied the loaves and fishes and the people who had been hungry reclined upon the soft grass fed and satisfied.

• *Jesus a Helper of Humanity*

Jesus was a teacher but at the same time he was a healer, a feeder, a helper of suffering humanity. He met human need as he found it. In this case the immediate need was for bread and he supplied the bread. It is not unlikely that the early church followed the example of Jesus in this matter. But soon the church became a teaching, preaching, worshiping institution. It lost all responsibility for providing for the material needs of the people. It began the plan of relegating to others the difficult task of providing food for the hungry. When it failed to do this service for humanity it began to lose its influence and its place in the world. It is a question whether Jesus, himself, would have had a hearing for his message had he not fed the people. In not a few instances the church has lost the interest of the people for its message because of the lack of sympathy and helpfulness for present, pressing human needs.

Fifty years ago the church confined itself strictly to spiritual messages and spiritual work. It almost spurned the thought of providing food, clothing and healing. This was the situation when I began my ministry and when I opened the front doors of the church on Monday morning and began to feed the hungry in the building where we had worshiped on Sunday I was severely criticized. Some prominent people left the church. For more than forty-five years I have fed people in the places where we have worshiped and where I have preached. The doors are open as wide on Monday as they are on Sunday. On Sunday I have tried to feed hungry souls and during the week in the same building I have been providing food for hungry bodies. As a result of this feeding, the multitudes have waited on my ministry and two great downtown churches have been saved.

Johnston Myers

• *Spiritual Work Not Neglected*

It is a false impression that the church which stresses the material needs of humanity neglects its spiritual work. Our prayer meetings have increased in numbers to such an extent that we have been obliged to hold them in the main auditorium of the church. At one of these prayer services we had five hundred and fifty-seven persons present, by actual count. During the hottest weather of summer we have seldom gone below an attendance of two hundred. We give away no supplies at this service; the people come for the spiritual help which they hope to receive.

The Sunday night service has been abandoned by many of the churches because so few came. Our Sunday evening service is led by a chorus of one hundred women, wives and mothers from the homes of the unemployed. This service is growing in numbers and interest constantly. We are very careful about receiving people into our membership who have been receiving their food in our building. I am constantly urging them to be faithful to their own churches if they are Christians and only to come to us if they are no longer identified with any church, either Protestant or Catholic. I bring no pressure to bear either for church membership or conversions. We will likely receive a large number of persons into our membership this year because so many have waited for such a long time. Many of them will now be eager to come when we press this matter from the pulpit or by personal invitation.

There are thousands of practical business men who will give nothing for missions or for the purely spiritual work of the church. They will, however, give generously to feed people and these funds are placed in my hands often with the remark, "Use this money as you think best." The fact is that when we do Christ's work in his way we have his divine approval and his blessing extends to every part of our service.

• *A Church Loved by Multitudes*

At the present time hundreds of ministers are seeing their mistake in not providing bread for the hungry and the movement which started forty-five years ago has now spread over the entire nation. The church is coming back into its own and winning the love and gratitude of the people. The church is the only properly qualified organization to dispense charity. It adds to the material gift the spiritual values. It can bring into human life, hope, courage, good cheer and faith. These church properties pay no taxes and it is absolutely wrong for them to be closed six days in the week.

The Immanuel building is the busiest place on the street. It is the best loved place on the street. It has not alone won the affection of the people who have been fed but there are hundreds of men who are kind hearted and who believe in an institution which feeds the hungry. Hundreds of those who are fed during

the week crowd our galleries on Sunday. Hundreds who have received the material bread have taken also the Bread of Life.

Body and soul are closely and intimately associated and the church must meet the needs of both. To neglect either half of its work will be fatal. The depression offers an opportunity which the church cannot afford to lose. If the cry of the hungry is met by the state and secular organizations, then whatever interest the people may have will be turned toward these organizations. If the cry of the hungry is met by the church there will be real affection, real gratitude, and interest in the church. The Protestant church cannot live unless it answers the cry of human need in a practical way.

• *Meeting Every Human Need*

Business men frequently ask the question about these church buildings, "What is their real value to the community?" "Is the investment worth while?" "Does it pay adequate returns?" There can be but one answer for most of these properties. They are not of sufficient value to the community to be continued and supported. I have had a most generous and continued support for years based largely upon the fact that we feed and clothe the bodies of men and women as well as providing inspiration and guidance for their souls.

Over our front door for many years was the significant motto, "We meet every human need without delay." The church of the future must live up to that motto if it is to have the love of the people.

QUOTABLE VERSE

What Makes a Nation Great?

NOT serried ranks with flags unfurled,
Not armored ships that gird the world,
Not hoarded wealth nor busy mills,
Not cattle on a thousand hills,
Not sages wise, nor schools nor laws,
Not boasted deeds in freedom's cause—
All these may be, and yet the state
In the eye of God be far from great.

That land is great which knows the Lord,
Whose songs are guided by His word;
Where justice rules 'twixt man and man,
Where love controls in art and plan;
Where, breathing in his native air,
Each soul finds joy in praise and prayer—
Thus may our country, good and great,
Be God's delight—man's best estate.

ALEXANDER BLACKBURN.

Till We Have Built Jerusalem

AND did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountain green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Riches

WHAT to a man who loves the air
Are trinkets, gauds, and jewels rare?
And what is wealth or fame to one
Who is a brother to the sun;
Who drinks the wine that morning spills
Upon the heaven-kissing hills,
And sees a ray of hope afar
In every glimmer of a star?

What to a man whose god is truth
Are spoils and stratagems, forsooth—
Who looks beyond the doors of death
For loftier life, sublimer breath;
Who can forswear the state of kings
In knowledge of diviner things,
The dreams immortal that unroll
And burst to blossoms in his soul?

ROBERT LOVEMAN.

God Beneath the Hill

I HAVE seen God alone on a high hill
Where all the cities burned to smoke and lost
Themselves, where noiseless rivers from the still
Forests of yesterday together crossed
The plain and faded out behind a knoll.
I have watched sunsets changing red and gold
Beneath clouds and gray shadows, the last goal
Of the faint, weary, and the young grown old.

I have seen men beside their lonely fires
And men with crowds of men lonelier far.
I have seen men wondering if God tires
Holding for them the unattainable star.
Now see! The cities rise to shape again
Out of the God that I have found with men.

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

These poems are reprinted from Quotable Poems, Second Series, by permission of the publishers.

WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

GRADUATING *from Brown University* in 1892, Rev. AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD was awarded a D. D. degree by that school ten years ago; he received his S. T. B. degree from Harvard in 1895, and the same year was ordained in the Unitarian ministry. His early pastorates were at Chelsea and Cambridge, Mass., and Newport, R. I. From 1905 to 1919 he ministered to the Church of the Unity at Springfield, Mass., and since 1919 he has led the First Unitarian church, Detroit. Dr. Reccord has a volume on "Who Are the Unitarians?"

Having vowed as a youth that he would never, under any circumstances, be a minister, Rev. E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN, completing his seminary course at Princeton, planned to take up teaching. But after a few months he found himself pastor of the English Reformed church, Freeport, Ill., and during the past three years he has ministered to the Carrollton Avenue Reformed church, Indianapolis. During these years he has pursued graduate work at the University of Chicago, Iowa State university, Butler university and other schools.

Widely known as minister of the Franklin Street Presbyterian church, Baltimore, since 1901, Rev. HARRIS E. KIRK has enlarged his field of influence by frequent lectures at Princeton and Vanderbilt universities, Hartford, McCormick, Bangor and Union (Va.) seminaries, Yale school of religion, etc. He has been professor of Biblical literature at Goucher college since 1928, and has also preached there frequently. He was summer preacher at Westminster chapel, London, from 1922 to 1930. Dr. Kirk was elected moderator of the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. in 1928. Among his books are "The Spirit of Protestantism" and "Stars, Atoms and God."

Since 1928 Rev. JAMES A. RICHARDS has been minister of the First Church in Oberlin (O.). He came to Oberlin from a ten-year ministry at the Congregational church, Winnetka, Ill., a suburb of Chicago. Dr. Richards was graduated from Phillips Andover academy, and received his A. B. at Harvard in 1900; there he also pursued graduate studies. He had his theological training at Union seminary, New York. His earlier ministry was at the United church, Newport, R. I., and the Mt. Vernon church, Boston.

*As minister of the Metropolitan Meth*odist church, Detroit, since 1913, Rev. MERTON S. RICE has solved the problem of getting a hearing for the gospel message. With a church membership of about three thousand, he preaches regularly to a "packed house." He came to Detroit from a nine-year ministry in Duluth, Minn., his earlier pastorates having been in Kansas and Iowa. Dr. Rice studied at Baker university, and for a time followed law courses at the University of Michigan.

For three years, 1915-18, Rev. BRUCE S. WRIGHT was minister of the American church in Manila, P. I. Shortly after, following a brief pastorate in Albany, N. Y., he came to his present charge at Asbury-Delaware Methodist church, Buffalo, where he is active also in interdenominational and civic fields. He is dean of the Summer Graduate School for Ministers conducted at Silver Lake, N. Y. Dr. Wright received his education at Allegheny college.

Rev. HERMAN F. REISSIG *is minister* of the Kings Highway Congregational church, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Rev. JOHNSTON MEYERS *is pastor of* the Immanual Baptist church, Chicago.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

ADIEL JARRETT MONCRIEF, JR., Oakland Baptist, Atlanta, Ga. "Trade in the Old Self." Ezek. 11:19—"I will put a new spirit within you."

E. E. YOUTZ, Tomkins Ave. Cong'l, Brooklyn. "Seekers and Sought." Job 23:3—"O that I knew where I might find him."

PAUL V. GALLOWAY, Community church, Joiner, Ark. "Voting a Straight Ticket." Matt. 6:24—"No man can serve two masters."

WILLIAM I. JONES, Methodist, Castle Rock, Colo. "War Done or Man Undone." Isa. 2:4—"Neither shall they learn war any more."

JAMES D. KITCHIN, JR., First Christian, Newport News, Va. "Summum Bonum." Mark 9:43—"It is good to enter into life."

PHILIP S. WATTERS, Memorial Methodist, White Plains, N. Y. "Seconds." Matt. 5:48—"Be ye therefore perfect."

FRANKLIN P. HARRIS, First Methodist, Barton, Md. "The Bequest of Jesus." John 14:27—"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you."

ROY H. BROWN, Pres. Silliman college, Dumaguete, Negros, P. I. "Betraying Accents." Matt. 26:73—"You certainly are one of them too, for your accent shows it."

IRWIN A. ENGLE, First Methodist, Upland, Cal. "Christianity—Fact or Fancy?" 2 Pet. 1:16—"They were no fictitious stories which we followed. . . . We had been eyewitnesses of his majesty."

FOR YOUR SERMON TITLE AND TEXT

..... *Title of sermon*

..... *Text used (Write out the text)*

..... *Name of minister*

..... *Name of church*

..... *Address*

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

WHETHER Gandhi's fast will actually be "unto death," no one knows at the moment these words are written. His determination to make the supreme sacrifice on behalf of the outcast classes of India (some forty millions) is directed first toward the Hindus who have so far been unwilling to include the untouchables in their own electoral unit, thus necessitating a separate electoral unit for the untouchables. But ultimately the fast is directed at Great Britain. For if the Hindus and the untouchables are reconciled in an electoral scheme of political equality, the problem will then be in Great Britain's lap. On the other hand, if Gandhi's martyrdom is allowed to be consummated, the fires of nationalism are likely to burn so fiercely that the very barriers between Hindu and Moslem will be burned away and a united India —Hindus, untouchables and Moslems—will make British rule forever impossible. Britain holds her power in India by the strategy of dividing to conquer. Gandhi is dealing with those great mystic forces that lie below political negotiations. If his death releases these forces, the whole movement for independence will be lifted to a new level.

Gandhi's Fast

The Book of the Month

JESUS AFTER NINETEEN CENTURIES. *By Ernest Fremont Tittle. The Yale Lectures on Preaching for 1932. Abingdon Press, $2.00.*

THERE may be a few men whose thoughts about Jesus I would be more earnestly curious to know than the thoughts of Dr. Tittle, but I cannot think of their names. Of this, however, I am absolutely sure: no American preacher would be in the list. Dr. Tittle stands for the modern interpretation of religion in the most thoroughgoing and uncompromising fashion. In philosophy, in theology, in ethics, in social vision, in economics, in international relations, in biblical criticism—in every direction he has broken with ancient orthodoxies. Yet he is pastor of the greatest church in Methodism and for years has commanded a vast congregation composed of students and professors and business men and workers who think of him as the Chicago pulpit's most potent prophetic voice. What does this man think about Jesus Christ? Who would not be curious to know? Here is a fragment of his answer taken from this stimulating book which I could wish might fall into the hands of every minister throughout the land: "It is now apparent that we cannot go on very much longer with our national antagonisms, racial antipathies and class conflicts, or with that reckless greed for gold which has pitted us against one another, caused us to fear and hate and hurt one another, led us more and more to depend upon physical force, taken away from us our faith in the reality and power of spiritual forces (our faith, that is, in God) and left us not only spiritually, but materially impoverished." There is only one way out, says Dr. Tittle, and that is the way that Jesus showed. "We must take the way of Jesus or perish. . . . Although nineteen hundred years have passed since he died, that one face, far from vanish, rather grows, becomes our light, our hope and our salvation."

A Thought for the Month

WHAT is the ultimate secret of great living? Is it the desire for gain, or fame or power? No. Is it the sheer altruistic love of others? No, though altruism is a part of it. The secret of great living is the consciousness that I am being trusted —therefore I must be trustworthy. Everything I am and have has been given to me. I own nothing. I owe all. I have gathered harvests upon which I bestowed no labor. Other men labored and I have entered into their labors. I am the undeserving beneficiary of the whole history of mankind. I fall heir to a cultural and social inheritance in whose making I had no part. My contemporaries work for me, in factory and mart and field, on road and rail, in office, ship and mine, in studio and classroom and laboratory, in the daylight when I rub elbows with them and in the night while I sleep. They create goods which I use, and institutions in which I participate. My parents from the day of my birth made incalculable sacrifices on my behalf. My government protects me. The schools which received me at a tender age and carried me on to whatever level of culture I have attained were founded by philanthropists and administered by scholars with no commensurable pay from me. I am altogether dependent. Yet I am free. I can use these treasures as I will. I can accept them and exhaust them on my private self, or I can accept them and turn them back into the common fund with the increment of my own labor and loyalty. It involves a point of honor. My life is an affair of honor—all the way from God's act of trust in me when he gave me my being, and from Christ's trust in me when he gave his life for my salvation, down to the man who sweeps the streets for my convenience. What am I going to do about it? If there is in me any spark of honor, I will treat my life not as a great asset to be exploited, but as a great debt to be paid with my devotion. On the walls of my inmost mind I will hang the flaming words of St. Paul: "I am debtor." I am being trusted—I will be trustworthy.

An Affair Of Honor

Charles Clayton Morrison

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